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**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1-4 (cancelled hereby).

1           5 (new). A decoding protection method, for operating on information  
2     obtained with a video data encoding method using a DCT (Discrete Cosine  
3     Transform) method of an MPEG algorithm, which information is transferred through  
4     a medium and comprises main data which are to be decoded, the decoding protection  
5     method comprising the steps of:  
6           detecting medium protection data which are also transferred through said  
7     medium;  
8           limiting reproduction based upon at least a film classification system;  
9           generating apparatus protection data which comprise at least first apparatus  
10    protection data and second apparatus protection data,  
11           wherein said first apparatus protection data are specific to a region or a  
12    country in which said main data are to be decoded and are unmodifiable by a recipient  
13    of said main data and said second apparatus protection data can be modified by the  
14    recipient to selectively define a plurality of protection levels including at least two  
15    levels which are respectively specific to adults and to children;  
16           defining a protection level based on said medium protection data and on said  
17    apparatus protection data, in combination; and

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18           executing decoding of said main data in accordance with said protection

19   level,

20           wherein the combination of said medium protection data and said first  
21   apparatus protection data specifies that said main data are decoded either in their  
22   entirety or not at all, and the combination of said medium protection data and said  
23   second apparatus protection data specifies that said main data are decoded in their  
24   entirety, partially, or not at all,

25           wherein, for each combination of protection levels based on said medium  
26   protection data and said apparatus protection data, there is a corresponding range of  
27   one or more possible values of final protection level, said corresponding range  
28   extending from a least severe value to a most severe value, and

29           wherein said medium conveys both said medium protection data and said  
30   main data in an identical form.

1           6 (new). A decoding protection method in accordance with claim 5, wherein  
2   said step of executing decoding of said main data comprises:

3           decoding said main data either in their entirety or not at all, in accordance  
4   with said combination of said medium protection data and said first apparatus  
5   protection data, and

6           decoding said main data in their entirety, partially, or not at all, in accordance  
7   with said combination of said medium protection data and said second apparatus  
8   protection data.

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1           7 (new). A decoding protection method in accordance with claim 6, wherein  
2   said step of executing decoding of said main data further comprises executing  
3   decoding of said main data in accordance with a value of final protection level  
4   between the least severe value and the most severe value in accordance with said  
5   combination of protection levels.

1           8 (new). A decoding protection method in accordance with claim 5, wherein  
2   said step of executing decoding of said main data further comprises executing  
3   decoding of said main data in accordance with a value of final protection level between  
4   the least severe value and the most severe value in accordance with said combination  
5   of protection levels.